

# BIG MEETING OF VETERANS

The Annual Reunion Opens In Atlanta With Immense Crowds Present.

## AN OVATION FOR GORDON

Gathering Formally Called to Order by General Clement Evans and Eloquent Speeches by Distinguished Southern Leaders Follow.

ATLANTA, July 20.—The morning train brought thousands of people into Atlanta to attend the opening exercises of the eighth annual reunion of Confederate veterans. Every regular train



GENERAL J. B. GORDON.

was handled in sections and excursions were run by all roads. Twenty-three thousand people, veterans and their friends, reached the city up to midnight and the congested condition of the downtown streets early gave indication that today's crowd would double that of yesterday.

The interest of the day centered in the convention at Piedmont park.

Among those who arrived early and took seats upon the stand were General Charles E. Hooker, the orator of the day, Governor Atkinson of Georgia, General Longstreet, General Dickson, commander of the Florida division, and General Stephen D. Lee, looked upon by some as a candidate for commander-in-chief.

Before the gathering was called to order, three cheers were given for the "gallant son of Alabama," Lieutenant Gordon, followed a moment later by three more for the gallant cavalry officer now at the front, General Joseph Wheeler.

General John B. Gordon, the commander-in-chief, arrived at 11:20 and was given a tremendous ovation. Cheers after cheers swept through the hall and the audience could not be still for five minutes.

General Clement A. Evans, the commander of the Georgia division, called the convention to order at 11:30 and prayer was offered by Rev. J. William Jones of Virginia, the chaplain general of the United Confederate veterans.

Addresses of welcome and responses followed, after which General Charles E. Hooker delivered the annual oration.

General Hooker's Speech.

General Hooker was introduced by General Gordon. He said that when the surrender was made the Confederate soldiers separated with their arms in their hands. He said that it was a capitulation, the Confederates being all along in part in peace, unmolested as they were in the hands of the victors.

"There is not one Confederate but has kept the terms of capitulation," said the speaker.

Referring to the surrender at Appomattox, General Hooker stated that the officers desired to fire a salute in honor of the victory. Everything was in readiness for the salute when General Grant, learning of it, said:

"Stop that firing; we have no great victory to be proud of, for we have been years capturing these 8,000 men, and we are now releasing them."

Welcoming addresses were delivered by Mayor Collier, Representative T. B. Felter, Colonel W. A. Hemphill and Governor Atkinson.

The impatient veterans could not wait to hear the orator and before the music had followed the last welcome address had ceased cries of "Gordon, Gordon," were heard in all parts of the auditorium. General Gordon was happily introduced by General Evans.

Speech by General Gordon.

General Gordon said:

"As a Georgian at home my proper place in this program would seem to be among those who bid these veterans welcome and not as the mouthpiece of the recipients of that welcome. The official status, however, to which my comrades have called me demands that I name I respond to these hearty greetings from my native state and my capital city. Geographically, therefore, I should play the part of host, but I must speak as your guest. Anomalous, it is not without its compensations. In my capacity of host and guest I can lean, as it were, on the bosom of my mother Georgia and feel her beating heart throbbing with a countless love and sympathy for all survivors of the south's unrivaled armies; while in the capacity of guest I throw around these visiting comrades the arms of a brother and in their name pledge their grateful acknowledgment for this magnificent reception."

Meaning of the Reunion.

"And now, my fellowcountrymen, may I ask if you have comprehended the significance of this splendid reunion; and of others like it which have been accorded us by Louisiana, by Alabama, by Tennessee, by Texas, by Virginia, by Mississippi, by all the people wherever it has been our fortune to convene. How strange, how marvelous, strange must these annual outpourings appear to all peoples outside the South's border."

"On another occasion I felt impelled to advert to the peculiar significance of these Confederate reunions; but the mind can never tire of their analysis—philosophy, patriotism, virtue and religion may all feed and feast upon such a theme without exhausting it; and the theme of liberty, the reverence for law and for regulated government, rejoices and grows strong in the sentiment and high purpose which these gatherings evoke in all the earth as so free from seeking, so untroubled by passion or prejudice, so purely philanthropic, nor even broadly patriotic. No disabused and defeated soldiers have ever been for

so long a period the special objects of so unique and universal approbation and affection by a people for whose cause that soldiery contended unsuccessfully.

No Parallel Is Known.

"In every other age, in every other land, popular plaudits have been but the echoes of shouts and martial paeans of victory. Public honors, costly demonstration and universal acclaim have been the heritage of successful armies. Imperial Rome, intoxicated with the glory of conquest, erected lofty arches to her mighty warriors, only when they bore her proud eagles above the ranks of conquering legion. France was united and exultant under the great Constantine so long as he was victorious; but he, too, was defeated, and at his fall the legislative assembly of his people abandoned and demanded the abdication of this hitherto idolized leader. Nor do our own brave countrymen, the brave veterans of the union army, furnish any parallel to the conditions which surround us. When they returned from the horrors of war it was to homes of increased comfort, to augmented wealth and with arms in their hands and victory on their banners. They returned to an established and grateful government.

"The return of the disarmed and disbanded Confederates, however, was to people made poor; to a land made desolate, covered with blackened ruins, where every home was in mourning, every breath was a sigh and every breeze a messenger of woe. And yet, after a third of a century has passed, after the ravages of those years have grown gray, and the government for which they fought lives only as a memory, these grim southern warriors gather in annual reunions, and are the recipients of a boundless hospitality dispensed by this recently impoverished but grateful people.

Faithful to Her Sons.

"On what page in history will you find a similar history? In what age or country have the shattered remnants of defeated armies banded together in a brotherhood so unique, a purpose so selfish? Among what defeated people has ever been witnessed such fidelity to the memories of an unsuccessful past; such devotion to the survivors of an unsuccessful army, coupled with such unselfish, genuine and responsive loyalty to the government from which they so resolutely and conscientiously sought separation? I challenge the world's annals to furnish a parallel.

"In conclusion, let me inquire what it all means. Simple justice to these brave and patriotic men, who yielded to the overwhelming numbers and resources; justice to the brave men, whose devotion to their cause must be measured by the countless sacrifices they made for it; justice to their present attitude toward the American republic, whose honor and freedom and justice they are always ready to defend. Do these reunions need you? Many of Southern youth, who are to stand all time with northern youth, in defense of popular liberty; justice to the past and justice to the future, all demand that our own prosperity and all mankind shall know the meaning of these magnificent demonstrations over the thinned ranks of a broken, but proud and once resistless army.

Wards of the Nation.

"Again, and finally, I press the question, what is the meaning of these Confederate pageants? Are they due to any covert or sinister aims, or in the remotest degree to selfseeking? Their open sessions and published proceedings, which all the world is challenged to inspect, furnish the answer. Do these reunions need you? Many of Southern youth, who are to stand all time with northern youth, in defense of popular liberty; justice to the past and justice to the future, all demand that our own prosperity and all mankind shall know the meaning of these magnificent demonstrations over the thinned ranks of a broken, but proud and once resistless army.

General John B. Gordon called the convention of veterans to order in the auditorium at Piedmont park at 10:30. He said:

"We are all Confederate men and women, but we are also Americans and proud of our country. (Cheers) God has blessed us as he has blessed no other nation. It becomes us who have been spared by His providence to sing praises to Him and I want the men whose shouts have been heard on many battlefields to join in a hymn of praise."

Committees on credentials and resolutions were announced.

The report of the historical committee was presented by its chairman, General Stephen D. Lee of Mississippi. The report says in part:

"In the just war in which our country is at present engaged, our comrades now living and the descendants of those

who have passed away have nobly used the opportunity to demonstrate to the world their order, their patriotism and their readiness to devote their lives in defense of this, our reunited country."

A resolution was passed commending the president for appointing Generals Lee and Wheeler to high positions in the army.

A resolution to erect the battle abbey in Richmond was passed by an overwhelming vote.

Vets Show Their Loyalty.

The following resolution offered by General Stephen D. Lee was unanimously and enthusiastically adopted:

"Whereas, The United States of America are at present engaged in a war with Spain in the interest of human liberty, and

"Whereas, Our comrades and our sons are members of that glorious army and navy, the achievements of which are now exciting the wonders of mankind; therefore, be it resolved:

"That we, the survivors of the United Confederate veterans, pledge our loyalty, and the hearty co-operation of the organization in this crisis of affairs, to stand ready at all times with men and money, irrespective of political affiliations, to support the president of the United States as commander-in-chief of our army and navy until an honorable peace has been conquered from the enemy."

Old Officers Are Re-Elected.

Colonel Ellison of Virginia nominated officers for the coming year the gentlemen now holding the positions and it was carried in a roar of applause.

The officers are General John B. Gordon of Georgia, general commanding; General Stephen D. Lee of Mississippi, commanding the department of Tennessee; General W. L. Cabell of Texas, commanding the department of Louisiana; and General Gordon of Georgia, commanding the department of Virginia.

General Gordon thanked the delegates and the gathering adjourned until tomorrow.

It is well known that General Gordon, on account of failing health, would have been willing to resign the honors and the burdens of the office of commander-in-chief to younger shoulders.

# GORDON ONCE MORE CHOSEN

Venerable Georgian Is Again Elected Commander of the Old Veterans.

## GREAT ROAR OF APPLAUSE

All the Present Officers of Association Are Renominated and Given New Terms by the Reunion Convention in Session at Atlanta.

ATLANTA, July 22.—The fight over the place for holding the next gathering of Confederate veterans grows warmer with the progress of the reunion. The Kentucky delegation, which last night was practically sure of the convention, finds this morning that Charleston is in the fight to stay and the influence of the South Carolina delegation is rapidly spreading.

The Kentucky delegation was assured yesterday of the support of Tennessee, but it appears that that state, at a meeting, voted 71 to 33 to go Charleston. In the speechmaking at the Tennessee meeting much was made of the fact that \$75,000 had been subscribed for the G. A. R. encampment and that, according to a telegram from Mayor Weaver of Louisville, but \$15,000 had been pledged for the Confederates.

Texas announces itself in favor of New Orleans, but as that city is not making any special effort toward securing the meeting, it is believed by the Louisville delegation that Kentucky will get the Texas vote on the second ballot.

The crowds are much larger than anticipated and last night several churches were thrown open for the accommodation of the veterans.

In the afternoon there were reunions of chaplains and surgeons in the rooms of the Young Men's Christian association building, also reunions of regiments and batteries in places selected by them.

Called to Order by Gordon.

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As in other reunions, this fact led to the discussion of various names for the place; and as on other occasions, the first day showed how impossible it would be for anybody else to be elected while Gordon would take it.

Battle Abbey For Richmond.

It has been definitely decided that the great battle abbey for the preservation of the relics of the confederacy will be built in Richmond, Atlanta, New Orleans and Nashville were desirous of securing the abbey.

The Memorial association, composed of several of the most prominent Confederate veterans, many of whom are attending the reunion, held a meeting

last night and it was decided that as Richmond was the capital of the Confederacy, that city would be the proper place for the location of the magnificent structure.

Mr. Charles Broadway Rouse has offered to donate \$100,000 to the building of the structure. This amount has not yet been raised.

Immense Crowd on Hand.

On last Wednesday it was estimated that there were at least 35,000 visitors in the city, but yesterday the trains brought into Atlanta 15,000 more arrivals and today the grand aggregate of visitors will closely approximate 50,000.

This makes the attendance upon the present reunion not only larger than the attendance upon the Nashville reunion, but larger than the attendance upon any former reunion with the exception of the one held two years ago in Richmond.

While there has been more or less confusion growing out of the vast multitudes to handle, still the work of supplying visitors with directions and accommodations has progressed with comparative smoothness and little complaint has been heard of inefficiency. Atlanta promised the old soldiers that she would take good care of them and she has kept her word.

Sons of Veterans Meet.

The Sons of Confederate veterans, who have been coming into town in detachments for two days, got together this afternoon for their first business session. Mr. H. N. Randolph, commander of the Georgia division, called the gathering to order. Addresses of welcome on the part of the state and city were delivered, to which Hon. Jesse Sparks responded.

The speech of the occasion was delivered by Mr. L. D. McAllister. His subject was the "Lost Cause." Mr. McAllister claimed the cause was never lost. It was not a question of secession which was settled, but a question of expediency. If the question was right then, it was now. "Never," said Mr. McAllister, in closing, "as long as we have the names of Lee, Jackson and Davis will the cause be lost."

Later, on balloting for officers, Commander-in-Chief Smyth and the other officers were all re-elected.

Social Feature of the Reunion.

The entertainment at the Confederate auditorium Thursday night in honor of the sponsors and maids of honor of the United Confederate veterans proved among the most enjoyable features of the reunion exercises.

A splendid program, consisting of music by the band, songs, recitations and addresses, was rendered.

Colonel W. L. Calhoun, the chairman of the committee on arrangements, presided and opened the entertainment with a few introductory remarks.

Mr. Lucian Knight, who has a well earned reputation as an orator, delivered the address of the evening. Mr. Knight was selected by the veterans to speak in behalf of the sponsors. In his address he touched upon the hardships, exploits, sacrifices and achievements of the Confederate soldier, the heroism and fidelity of southern women and the patriotism of the sponsors, who are the daughters of the southern women of the sixties.

The speaker was in splendid condition and handled his subject with magnificence. His delivery was full of expression and beauty of diction in defending the honor of the heroes from slander and calumny appealed to his audience, and he was generously applauded throughout his address.

Andrews on General Lee.

Mr. E. Benjamin Andrews, president of Brown university, Thursday night delivered his famous lecture on General Robert E. Lee at the Grand Opera

House. The lecture was heard by a large number of Confederate veterans.

After dwelling at length on the numerous successes gained by Lee during the civil war, Mr. Andrews closed by saying:

"But great as were the achievements of this great man as a general, incomparably greater than his military genius was his grand and almost unmatched moral character. His unselfishness, his patience, his love of justice, all his attributes conspired to make him the ideal citizen, without fear and without reproach, pure of thought and speech, never irreverent."

"People are prone to allude to all Lee fought for as the 'lost cause.' Yet, like Oliver Cromwell, Lee has accomplished what he fought for, and more than could have been accomplished had he been victorious. At the close of the war we find the supreme court of the United States deciding the status of individual states, and the result is found to be that while the Union is declared to be indestructible, each state is regarded as an independent unit of that nation. Who would dare wipe out today a state's individuality, and do we not find today, instead of a centralized power in congress adjudicating things pertaining to the states, the states themselves settling these matters?"

Baltimore has practically dropped out of the race and the Louisville delegation made a strong fight for their support with but indifferent success. Each delegation has several speakers, who presented the claims of their respective cities for the encampment.

The convention finally decided to hold the next annual encampment at Charleston, S. C.

Only one ballot was taken, resulting 1,070 to 801.

The convention then adjourned sine die.

Flight Over Meeting Place.

There was a lively contest between Louisville and Charleston for the next reunion, each of them holding out flattering inducements. Both had representatives at work from the beginning with first one and then the other apparently in the lead.

Louisville, it will be remembered, was a prominent candidate at Nashville for this meeting captured by Atlanta.

A telegram from the mayor of Louisville was received by Major John H. Leathers, at convention hall, on Wednesday saying that the people of the city joined unanimously in the invitation.

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# VETERANS ON DRESS PARADE

Graycoats Wildly Cheered as They Pass Through the Atlanta Streets.

## GORDON LEADS HIS ARMY

Historic Charleston Selected as the Place For Holding the Next Reunion After an Exciting Contest Between the Carolina Town and Louisville.

ATLANTA, July 23.—The city is decorated from end to end with the stars and bars, the stars and stripes and endless miles of bunting, and citizens and visitors gave the veterans a rousing welcome when they passed through the streets today in annual parade. Owing to the summer heat and the rapidly aging veterans, the hour for the parade was fixed at 5 o'clock and the route traversed was very short.

Mrs. Stonewall Jackson, Miss Winnie Davis, Mrs. John B. Gordon and Mrs. Cabell E. Curry, president of the Daughters of the Confederacy, occupied carriages, as did also General and Mrs. Longstreet, General and Mrs. Hooker and General Wade Hampton. The division sponsors rode in carriages at the head of each division.

The parade was escorted by the sons of veterans and General John B. Gordon once more rode at the head of his men.

The governor, mayor, committees of the legislature and city council reviewed the parade from stands erected in different places along the line of march.

Vets March in the Rain.

Just as the parade began a heavy rain set in. Despite this fact, however, the veterans continued to march, and apparently enjoyed the experience, as it had a tendency to forcibly remind them of the hardships endured in the sixties.

The sight was a remarkable one and one which will never be forgotten by those who were fortunate enough to witness it. Here were hundreds of old veterans, who have almost reached the limit allotted to each man as a life, marching light hearted through the streets of Atlanta behind generals and commanders, who led them in war, not paying the slightest attention to the shower of rain which beat against them and remaining steady regardless of the consequences of the exposure.

Gordon Reviews the Parade.

The most remarkable thing of the parade and the most remarkable scene which has probably been witnessed in the city was the review of the parade by General John B. Gordon, the gallant commander of the veterans.

After riding at the head of the column during all the rain, he returned to the reviewing stand, and while the rain was at its worst, he remained on his beautiful black horse and with bare head watched his old comrades in arms pass slowly by and bowed gracefully in response to the cheers of the mighty course which stood in water several inches deep and watched the inspiring scene.

After the first downpour of rain it was thought that the parade had been broken up, and therefore when General Gordon put in his appearance marching at the head of an unbroken column the crowd went wild.

Ovation to Miss Davis.

General Gordon presided at the meeting of the veterans in the auditorium today. He introduced Miss Winnie Davis, the veterans giving her a great ovation.

After some minor business had been transacted a resolution was passed commending the expression "the war of the rebellion" and expressing a desire that the late contest at arms be termed "the civil war between the states."

A number of veterans and their friends having expressed a desire to change the date of holding the annual encampment until October, the matter was brought up. After some discussion it was decided that the date remain unchanged and the gatherings will continue to be held in July.

The selection of the place for holding the next encampment was the special order for 11 o'clock. It was after the noon hour, however, before Chairman Gordon announced that the selection of the next meeting place was next on the program.

The Kentucky delegation was early at work among the delegates in their efforts to secure the next encampment for Louisville. The delegation from the Louisville board of trade has had its lines set some time and the delegation already seen good results. Charleston is putting up a strong fight.

The claims of the South Carolinians are that their state furnished more men for the civil war than Kentucky and that Louisville is out of the way. South Carolina has the support of Texas in this contest and claims that that state holds the deciding vote.

Vets Go to Charleston.

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The committee from Charleston stated that the city intended to build an auditorium with a seating capacity of 10,000 and that the city council would give \$5,000 toward entertaining the veterans.

On the first day it appeared that Charleston was favored by Alabama, Florida, Virginia and Louisiana, while Louisville claimed Texas, Mississippi and Tennessee, with Georgia divided.

Reunion Comes to an End.

Immediately after the selection of Charleston as the next meeting place, General Cabell of the Tennessee department stated that as there was no business to be brought before the convention it was adjourned.

